

## Former North Adams Textile Mill Getting Agricultural Focus / iBerkshires.com



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By Tammy Daniels

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06:45PM / Friday, August 07, 2015 **Salvatore Perry and Karla Rothstein have plans to turn a section of the Cariddi Mill into an agricultural business incubator & production facility, with longer-range plans for hospitality and residential use.**

NORTH ADAMS, Mass. — The Cariddi Mill is about to undergo at least a \$5 million investment for the first phase of its renovation under its new ownership.

Salvatore Perry and Karla Rothstein, principals of architectural firm Latent Productions of New York City, said on Friday that they envisioned a food production and events space in the 65,000 square-foot Weave Shed on the east end of the property to open next spring.

Further buildout could include a hotel, residential apartments and a greenhouse on the roof.

"The specificity of what exactly will come in has to do with the tenants that we are speaking to now," Rothstein said, standing in the now empty space. "But it's very important to us that it be a healthy, diverse mix of producers."

Plans include an events space on the northeast corner, an incubator kitchen for small businesses requiring food preparation, a co-work space, a fabrication area and dedicated areas for dairy, grains, aroma, preserves, fermentation, a co-generation plant and a retail food and beverage section.

"They were coming up with some visions, as you'll see today, that are absolutely incredible and really can promise a long-term vision for this entire complex," said Mayor Richard Alcombright.

The Weave Shed will be developed as Greylock Works, calling back to its original appellation of Greylock Mill. The couple, operating as Greylock Works LLC, [purchased the 240,000 square foot complex](#) on July 23 for \$749,000 from the Cariddi family. They also bought a second piece of property, containing the mill's former water-power flume, for \$1,000, with plans to conserve that area.

Perry said a lot of due diligence has been done over the past year and since signing a purchase-and-sale agreement for the property. State Rep. Gailanne Cariddi, whose father bought the mill back in the 1970s for his wholesale business, even took them around to see seven other mills in the region, he said, before they signed the contract.

They first researched the area, siting North Adams as a hub within the both the north/south corridor from Philadelphia/New York to Canada and along an east/west line from Boston to Buffalo.

Rothstein pointed to the area's resources including the Clark Art Institute, Williams College, Massachusetts Museum of Contemporary Art, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, the Appalachian Trail, the airport, the future extensions of the bike path and the natural setting.

"For us, it was about synthesizing all the information we could gather and a lot of it had been done," she said, referring to the city's recently completed Vision 2030 master plan and reports by the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and Berkshire Grown, among others. "Those documents existed and were accessible . . . we could start to consider the real potential."

They have also met with local and state development officials, crediting the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission and MassDevelopment in particular for helping prepare them for permitting and other needs, including applying for brownfields credits and grants. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and the state Department of Environmental Protection have also eased their path.

"Since we met, we have had several really extensive meetings with regional, and state players," said Alcombright.

"We were able to arrange these meetings where we'd have 15-20 people at a table and have very interesting conversations about how this could all work and how it could come together overtime.

They settled on an agricultural focus based on the healthy and local food movement that has been growing in this area thanks to projects like Berkshire Grown and Berkshire Farm & Table.

"Nationally, the USDA is all about local food systems and supporting those initiatives," said Perry. A lot of thought is going into how the tenants will fit into the New England regional agricultural system.

For example, the fermenting room may lean toward hard cider making, since this is a growing industry, and because there are orchards that can support that venture. But they aren't ready to reveal any tenants or potential tenants at this point. They do expect to reveal more next week to the City Council and release information later as the project progresses.

As for why the New Yorkers settled on the former Plunkett textile mill, the answer was apparently love at first sight.

They were visiting the Berkshires for the first time last year, stopping to see a friend in Williamstown on their way to pick up their daughter in New Hampshire. Driving back from seeing the Clark Art's newly built addition, they were struck by the State Road mill and pulled over to look at.

"The building was what made us stop," said Rothstein. It was then they noticed the for-sale sign. Intrigued, they passed up a concert that night to research the area from their hotel room; they picked up their daughter the next day and came straight back to get into the building.

Revamping mills and industrial structures isn't a new thing for Latent; but what struck the two architects was the differences in the mill's overall structure — the long, low Weave Shed with its sawtooth roof on one end and the "majestic" four-story building on the other.



**Development of the four-story section is planned for a later stage.**

"The idiosyncrasies of the overall complex are part of its attraction, it isn't a monolithic entity, and yet because of its scale, there is a kind of expanse, an extensive spatial nature," Rothstein said. "The space we're in has an incredibly unique quality. ... completely different, grand majestic scale that really couldn't be built today."

Perry said the Cariddis had been good stewards of the historic mill.

"It gave us an opportunity to give it a new life, it gave the community an asset that could be improved upon," he said.

They are working with Menck Windows of Chicopee, which is designing a prototype window to try at the mill, and

talking with regional collaborators that also include [Mezze](#), [Project Native](#), Williams' Center for Sustainability, [Hoosac Harvest](#), [The Nutrition Center](#), the [Franklin County CDC](#) and the [Carrot Project](#). While the initial focus will be on the Weave Shed, landscaping will also take place and a later and decrepit addition to the former aluminum anodizing works there will be torn down. A crew was at the mill on Friday repairing a water line to get water into the building.

Rothstein said Latent Productions has worked on projects as far afield as Italy and Chicago. "We enjoy challenges," she said. "In fact, I think our best work comes when we're challenged."

"We pride ourselves on being pioneer developers looking for the next opportunity," said Perry, adding the couple had deferred on a New York venture at the time to focus on North Adams. "That speaks volumes to the potential we see in this area."

*Edited for minor corrections on Aug. 8 at 10 p.m.*